

# Seeking Visibility, Delivering Action

The MPI Black Meeting Professionals Community anticipates an exciting 2023 with a prominent sponsor in Destination DC.

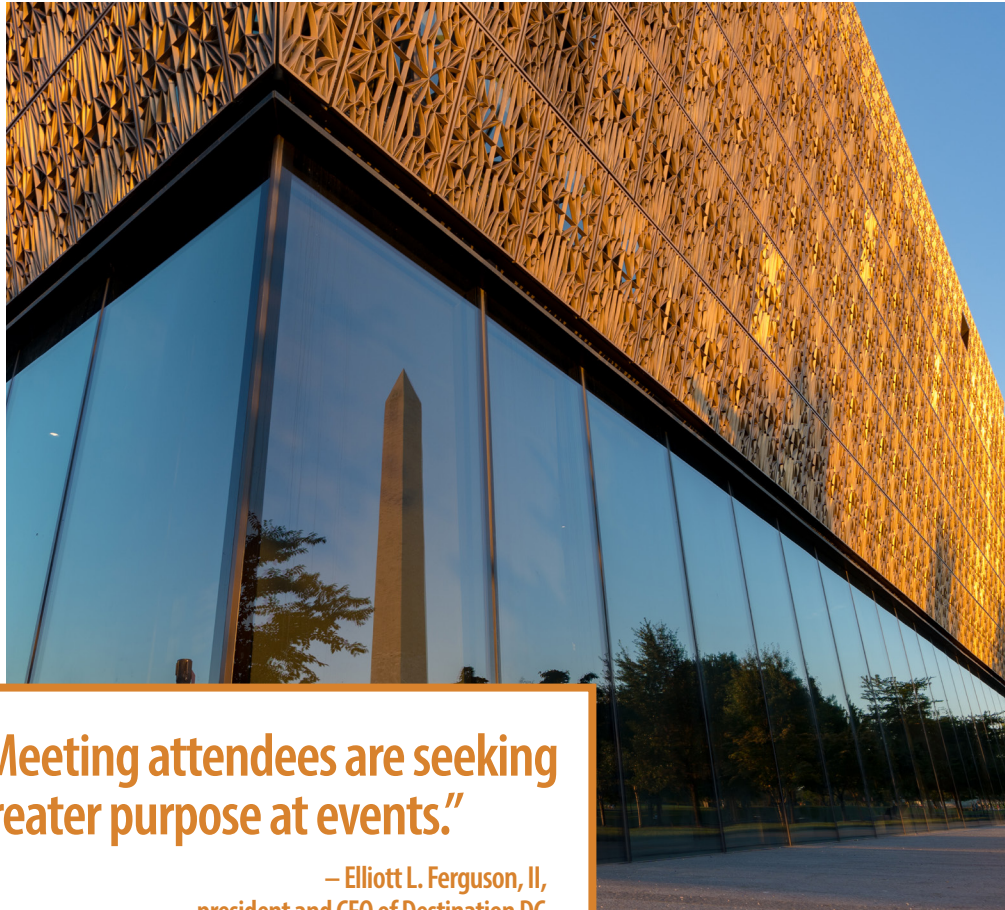
**A**s MPI volunteers plan for a busy year ahead, we reached out to Sandra Serrant, CMP, PMP, MS (MPI Greater New York Chapter), events manager and adjunct professor at the Research Foundation of The City University of New York, for a quick update on the MPI Black Meeting Professionals Community—a group that she is enthusiastically leading.

## How's the MPI Black Meeting Professionals Community been going over the past year?

**Sandra Serrant:** "We have grown consistently in membership and we now have a solid group of volunteers guiding the MPI Black Meeting Professionals Community who are busy planning out the year. We are all working very hard to gain visibility for the MPI Black Meeting Professionals Community."

## Are there any updates you'd like to tease for the MPI Black Meeting Professionals Community for the year ahead?

**Serrant:** "We now have a fantastic sponsor, Destination DC. I am excited that this sponsor saw the importance of the MPI Black Meeting Professionals Community and its members and wanted to partner with us. Together we have quite a few exciting plans, including a virtual town hall (details to come!) and activations at the [World Education Congress 2023 in June](#)."



**"Meeting attendees are seeking greater purpose at events."**

— Elliott L. Ferguson, II,  
president and CEO of Destination DC

Speaking of the group's sponsor, this winter Destination DC released the following statement announcing its association with and support of the MPI Black Meeting Professionals Community, along with some important historical context.

**DESTINATION DC IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE MPI BLACK MEETING PROFESSIONALS COMMUNITY**

Our values as a city align with those

of this community and we sought this opportunity to support specific initiatives around black meeting professionals. Over the next year, we'll be on this journey



together and look forward to creating platforms and opportunities for an amazing exchange of thoughts and ideas.

### Washington, DC: Connect with purpose

From the city's roots as a vibrant community for African Americans to the opening of recent landmarks including the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and Black Lives Matter Plaza, Washington, DC is rich with Black history and culture. DC has remained home to a large Black population that has shaped the city's identity as a culturally diverse and intellectual capital.

Washington, DC is a destination known for its dedication to progress

community and the city's intellectual capital, DDC supports the opportunity to meet with purpose. Planners are empowered to advance their organization's mission and progressive agendas."

### Connected capital

With more than 175 embassies reflecting a wide range of cultures and 10-plus Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the area, DC's skilled talent hub offers unmatched access to thought-leaders and expert speakers. With so many organizations advocating for social change in the city, access to diverse speakers whose relatable content for attendees often yields more meaningful outcomes. A top city for technology and social

entrepreneurs, the nation's capital is a leader in key industries such as tech, biotech/pharma, medical and education. The city's economic and sustainability initiatives have attracted businesses like Amazon, Boeing and Raytheon to the area, expanding its intellectual capital to new industries including space exploration.



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and inclusivity. As the host of some of the most influential protests in the country's history, the city has long been a gathering place for people to put their power of free speech to work, where peaceful and powerful demonstrations have impacted the future of the country.

"Meeting attendees are seeking greater purpose at events," said Elliott L. Ferguson, II, president and CEO of Destination DC. "They want to make a difference in a destination, connect with people and impact local communities. By leveraging the DEI

### The DEI impact

Diversity, equity and inclusion are at the forefront of Washington, DC's ethos. Meeting planners use the [DEI District](#) content hub on [washington.org](#) to explore DC's history and experiences connected with racial and social equity. Event planners will also find options to engage with the city's community venues and sustainable spaces or Black-, women- and immigrant-owned businesses during their event. Socially minded venues range from the modernized Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library to the new

Salamander Hotel, a 373-room hotel in Southwest owned by Sheila Johnson, a DEI champion and advocate of the hospitality community. Leading corporate social responsibility programming creates a natural alignment with an organization's social impact goals. Meetings professionals can understand DC's commitment to diversity and create lasting change in Washington, DC beyond the immediate economic impact of their event by donating their time and money to local charitable organizations serving the DC community. From joining a neighborhood river clean-up to enriching the lives of DC youth with educational opportunities, there are numerous opportunities to enhance your event by giving back.

### Stay for the history and culture

Meeting attendees can discover what makes DC such an inclusive city and how to experience its local [history, culture and community](#). From discovering DC's official music genre, go-go, to connecting with local artisans or supporting Black-owned restaurants, there are numerous ways to engage with the vibrant heartbeat of the nation's capital.

Washington, DC is filled with free museums and attractions making it an added value for meeting attendees who want to stay and explore the city after their event. Destination DC supports meeting planners with itineraries tailored to an organization's interests, from group experiences that [explore Black history and culture](#), touring "Black Broadway" in the [Shaw neighborhood](#) or honoring the legacy of important moments in history.

*Get more information on [MPI's Black Meeting Professionals Community](#) and join other dedicated meeting professionals seeking connection, opportunities and professional growth.*